

On April 20, 2010, an explosion occurred on BP's Deepwater Horizon drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico. The explosion caused the tragic death of 11 workers and led to what has now become the worst oil spill in U.S. history. Find updates and information about the spill below.

Recent Action

Drilling in the Great Lakes

In a joint letter from Representatives from across the Great Lakes region, Congresswoman Bean urged Canada to review its policy on oil drilling in the Great Lakes and to consider banning all drilling activity. [Read a copy of the letter here.](#) Oil drilling in the Great Lakes is already permanently banned in U.S.-controlled waters, thanks to a law written by Congresswoman Bean and others and passed in the 109th Congress.

CLEAR Act

On July 30, the House passed the CLEAR Act, the most comprehensive overhaul of drilling regulations in decades. The bill strengthens oversight on oil drilling companies, including independent certification of critical safety equipment; dismantles the troubled agency overseeing drilling, the Mineral Management Service, into separate agencies to eliminate conflicts of interest; and holds private corporations accountable by removing the liability cap. For more details on the legislation, [click here.](#)

Information on Air, Food, and Water Safety

[Air](#) : With the prevalence of vapor concerns from oil near the Gulf coast and the controlled burning to help contain the spread of oil, air quality is a health concern. EPA has initiated an air monitoring effort to ensure the safety of local residents and track any developing air quality changes.

[Food](#) : Although crude oil has the potential to taint seafood with flavors and odors caused by exposure to hydrocarbon chemicals, the public should not be concerned about the safety of seafood in stores at this time. There is no reason to believe that any contaminated product has made its way to the market.

[Water](#) : NOAA is restricting fishing for a minimum of ten days in federal waters most affected by the BP oil spill, largely between Louisiana state waters at the mouth of the Mississippi River to waters off Florida's Pensacola Bay. The closure is effective immediately. Fishermen who wish to contact BP about a claim should call 1-800-440-0858.

Information on Spill-Related Damages and Claims

Those affected by the BP Oil Spill who wish to contact BP about a claim should call 1-800-440-0858. For those who have already pursued the BP claims process and are not satisfied with BP's resolution, can call the Coast Guard at 1-800-280-7118. For more information on assistance for small business owners and others in affected areas, visit [DisasterAssistance.gov](#).

What You Can Do

Submit your vessel as to help in the cleanup, or to submit ideas for alternative response technology, services or products, call (281) 366-5511 or click [here](#) .

Report oiled or injured wildlife: 1-866-557-1401

Report oil on land: 1-866-448-5816

[View additional contact information](#) and ways to keep informed.

SBA disaster loans/ loan deferment

The Small Business Administration is providing disaster loans and debt relief to affected small businesses.

Business owners who are unable to visit a center may obtain loan information and applications forms by:

Calling the toll free numbers, (800) 659-2955, or (800) 877-8339 for the hearing impaired.

Emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov ;

Apply online using Electronic Loan Application at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela> .

More information on the SBA Web site at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance .

Daily Updates

The Administration posts regular updates of its efforts to combat the spill [here](#) .

At the beginning of the event, the Coast Guard elevated the response and established a Regional Command Center and Joint Information Center in Robert, La., inviting all partners in the response to join. Get the latest updates from the partners on the ground in the Gulf Coast: www.restorethegulf.gov